

Community Update

Notes to BOP's Local Partners

June 18, 2007

A Word from the Administrator, Jerry L. Vroegh

As some of you may be aware, there has been a recent change in the leadership of the Community Corrections and Detention Services Branch (CCD). Stewart Rowles, who served for several years as the CCD Administrator assumed new duties as the Administrator of Intelligence and Counter Terrorism Branch for the Bureau. Mr. Rowles made several significant contributions to the development of reentry initiatives and his work over the years is greatly appreciated.

In May 2007, I was selected as the new CCD Administrator. My most recent position was as the Executive Assistant for the Director of the Bureau of Prisons. My prior Bureau experience in community corrections was as a Community Corrections Manager, Contract Oversight Specialist, National Transitional Drug Abuse Treatment (TDAT) Administrator, and as the Executive Assistant to the Assistant Director of the Community Corrections Division.

It is my goal to continue to provide clear direction to the discipline and to develop creative innovations that will continue to meet the challenges presented by the field of community corrections.

In continuing the thought of providing clear direction, the June edition of the Community Update will outline and discuss the following community corrections related issues: the development and impending release of the newly revised Residential Reentry Center (RRC) Statement of Work (SOW), TDAT treatment issues and graduated sanctions, and sex offender management in residential reentry centers. I would like to thank the Bureau's Clinical Treatment Coordinator, Dr. Patti Butterfield, for contributing her insight and expertise as it relates to managing sex offenders within a community setting.

In closing, I look forward to meeting and working with you all as we continue to strengthen our partnership in providing effective reentry services for Bureau offenders.

Residential Reentry Center Statement of Work

In April 2007, Community Corrections Administrators and industry leaders had the opportunity to review the draft RRC Statement of Work. The draft review led to several discussions regarding newly proposed SOW initiatives and language. These discussions generated several new recommendations and subsequent revisions. Currently, the final RRC draft is being reviewed and prepared for field distribution. It is anticipated that the new RRC SOW will be finalized and issued in July 2007.

Transitional Drug Abuse Treatment & Graduated Sanctions

The TDAT program plays a significant role during an offender's reentry process. In fiscal year 2006, over 50 percent of offenders transferring to an RRC participated in TDAT programming. Offenders are typically faced with a variety of challenges during their transition back into the community. Their expectations for how things will progress oftentimes clash with reality, and the ensuing frustration and anxiety tax the very skills they have learned to cope with such challenges. During this adjustment the offender's overall behavior and attitude are all important treatment issues.

It is certainly our hope that offenders will successfully complete their reentry transition. However, there will be instances when they may return to the thought processes that led to their subsequent incarceration. This may manifest in rule bending and breaking at the RRC and pushing limits and boundaries with staff to see what they can get away with. We want to address these manipulative behaviors in the early stages, return their focus on maintaining the treatment gains they achieved while in the Residential Drug Abuse Program, and encourage pro-social choices. Therefore, it is imperative that these behaviors are identified and reported to us.

Over the past few years, the Bureau has experienced a philosophical shift moving towards the concept of graduated sanctions and an emphasis on informal resolutions when appropriate. When offenders participating in TDAT are subject to an informal resolution and or sanction, it is my expectation that RRC staff communicate this to the TDAT service provider and affected CCM staff.

In a collaborative effort, holding offenders accountable for their choices, keeping the lines of communication open, and through the use of graduated sanctions we can all better assist the offender during reentry.

Sex Offender Management in RRCs

Contributed by Patti Butterfield, Ph.D.

Clinical Treatment Coordinator, Federal Bureau of Prisons

The Bureau of Prisons is responsible for the custody of over 11,000 sex offenders. Each year, approximately 4,000 sex offenders are released from Bureau custody to the community and a significant number of these offenders release to an RRC placement. The Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act, which includes a provision for civil commitment of sex offenders, has highlighted the need to provide appropriate services for this population. In response, additional sex offender management and treatment programs are under development throughout the Bureau.

Basic Facts about Adult Sex Offenders

- sex offenders are a heterogeneous group of offenders
- sex offenders generally do not specialize in a particular type of offense
- sex offenders are more likely to recidivate with a non-sexual crime
- most sex offenders know their victims
- a single sex offender may have a very high number of victims
- sex offenders often have substance abuse or dependency issues
- approximately 15 percent of sex offenders have a co-occurring mental illness
- sex offenders recidivate at comparatively lower rates than other offenders

(Source: "Managing Adult Sex Offenders in the Community: Improving Supervision Services and Outcomes", Dakota County community corrections Advisory Board, 2004.)

Special Conditions of Supervision for Sex Offenders

Special conditions of supervision for sex offenders are essential to the effective management of this population. While these conditions are specifically linked to the offender's term of supervised release, offenders should also be expected to adhere to these conditions during their stay at the RRC. Attention to these special conditions offers RRC staff an important opportunity to intervene early in the offense cycle, reducing the likelihood of a re-offense.

Special conditions of supervision for sex offenders may include:

- Sex Offender Treatment: participation and progress in sex offender-specific evaluation and approved treatment as well as any recommended supplemental treatment, e.g., substance abuse or mental health treatment. Required components of the evaluation may include a polygraph examination, plethysmograph examination, and/or other psychological tests.
- Polygraphs: routine polygraph examinations.
- Restricted Contact with Minor Children: restriction from any intentional or prolonged contact with children, often regardless of the age and gender of the offender's prior victims. No time spent in locations where children are likely to be present, e.g. parks, schools, child-oriented businesses, including no employment with child-oriented businesses.
- No Victim Contact: no contact of any kind with the victim(s) or their families (including contact through third parties).
- Computer Restrictions: restricted or limited use of computers, in particular no use of the Internet.
- Other Technology Restrictions: restricted possession and use of cameras, camcorders, and/or cell phones.
- Alcohol and Drug Restrictions: no use of alcohol or drugs.
- Adult Material/Entertainment Restrictions: no viewing, purchasing or possessing of adult materials and no patronizing of adult entertainment businesses.
- Social/Sexual Behavior Restrictions: all dating relationships are to be reported. No non-therapeutic contact with other convicted sex offenders.

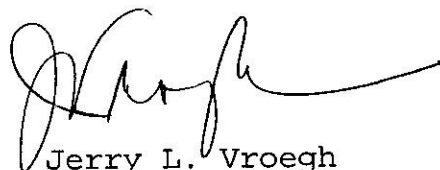
- Disclosure: disclosure of their status as a sex offender and/or the special conditions of their supervision to employers, schools, etc.
- Registration: appropriate registration as a sex offender.

Tools for monitoring compliance with these conditions include information obtained from polygraph examinations and reports from third parties such as employers, family members, neighbors, RRC staff, treatment providers and law enforcement officers. Intervening immediately when an offender violates one of these special conditions, or engages in any other high risk behavior, is critical to reducing the risk of recidivism. (Source: Center for Sex Offender Management Training Module)

To effectively manage sex offenders in an RRC:

- be very clear about expectations and roles;
- be matter of fact about the offense and offense cycle;
- be knowledgeable about the offender and any special conditions of supervision;
- emphasize the benefits of cooperation and the costs of failure; and
- work collaboratively with treatment providers and other stakeholders.

In order to succeed, high risk sex offenders should be actively engaged in and consistently attending an approved community-based treatment program. In addition, the offender needs to develop a community support system, including friends, family members and employers who are aware of the offender's criminal history, supportive of his relapse prevention plan, and can readily recognize high risk behaviors. RRC staff can take an active role in ensuring compliance with these recommendations. (Source: Center for Sex Offender Management Training Module)



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and Detention Services Branch